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20 April 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : Review of P-31 Engine Availabilities

PROBLEM:

Through a review of P-31 engine procurement and availabilities to ascertain the equipping dates for Detachments A, B and C with the -31 engine.

ASSUMPTIONS:

- a. The P-31 engine will be flight proven and ready for overseas use by 1 July.
- b. Detachment A will be equipped with the -31 engine starting 1 July.
- c. Detachment B will move out from Watertown the latter part of August with -31 engines.
- d. The -37 engines will be used for training pilots at Watertown.
- e. USAF will activate its U-2 program at Turner Air Force Base on 1 May 1956 and that the first USAF U-2 will be delivered about 1 September.
- f. USAF U-2 airplanes will be ready to be deployed in the Air Force about 1 January 1957.

ENGINE PROCUREMENT:

USAF has a procurement program for 30 -37 engines and 70 -31 engines. They do not contemplate procuring additional -31 engines for the U-2 program but with SAC's concurrence -31 engines might be diverted from the KC-135's.

Mr. Bissell's recent review of -31 prototype engine availabilities shows 1 or 5 for our project before the end of April, 7 to be delivered next month, and 3 in June. According to [redacted] schedule, by July these should have been delivered 25 prototype -31's. [redacted] latest schedule on production versions shows the following -31 availabilities:

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September	2	
October	6	
November	0	
December	4	
Jan. 1957	5	
February	7	
March	1 - 5	(beginning new contract order on production models)
April	6	
May	6	
June	6	
July	2	

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25X1 [] people also consider engine overhaul of -31's at
 25X1 Pratt & Whitney on the order of 90 days. Mr. Russell indicated in his
 25X1 talks with [] last week that the project will push Pratt
 & Whitney to cut the actual overtime at their plant on -31 engines to
 approximately 5 weeks. We also considered five days for delivery from
 Lakenheath to P & W and five days delivery from P & W back to Lakenheath.
 This differs from [] present schedule.

DISCUSSION:

25X1 [] said he does not contemplate procuring any more -31's
 because he feels we have sufficient engines to take care of the 19 U-2's
 procured in this entire program, that is, for both our program and for
 the Air Force's. He said that if we procure any more airplanes we will
 possibly then be basing the procurement on a 50-hour life estimate which
 25X1 is unrealistic because [] stated that he is certain we can obtain
 25X1 150-hour life out of the -31 engine and even might guess that within a
 few years we could push it up to 200 hours. [] further stated
 that in taking the stand that we had enough engines to handle the airplanes,
 our project had first priority in his mind and that we would certainly
 be able to equip our detachments but that we would have to sit down and
 work out a realistic schedule of airplanes by numbers and engines by numbers
 available in order to see how delivery dates would match our employment
 schedule. He felt from his knowledge of the program that if P & W's delivery
 schedule of -31's does not continue to slip, our project will not be hurt.

Col. Berg interposed and stated that he did not go along with the idea
 that our project get number one priority over the Air Force because if
 we had articles equipped with the -31 engine to the detriment of the
 Air Force U-2's, regardless of whose U-2's sat on the ground the use for
 the nation was being hurt. He said that when both our airplanes and the
 Air Force's are ready for overflight work, then engines should be available
 so that none of these birds would sit on the ground.

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25X1 [] said that by this Col. Berg was indicating that he would have to buy more engines just to take care of this possibility. Col. Berg said that this is the problem. However, he still indicated that he would not say yes to our project having any priority over the Air Force U-2 program.

I believe we all have the same thinking except that the fact remains that regardless of who gets priority, if we have Detachments A and B deployed overseas and they are being held up in operating due to lack of -31 engines, the Air Force program is going to have to suffer for ours. This will naturally have to be ironed out if that impasse does arrive, with possibly General Cabell and the Chief of Staff, USAF.

I do not think this is a crucial point right now until we get together and lay out aircraft delivery dates by number and review P & W's latest P-31 delivery dates and try to mesh these and arrive at exactly what engines will be available for the Detachments and what dates such matching up can be realized.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

On the basis of the above assumptions, I recommend the following:

- a. That we equip Detachment A as soon as possible, shooting for 1 July.
- b. That we equip Detachment B with -31 engines when it moves overseas.
- c. That all training at Watertown be conducted with -37's.
- d. That when C moves out, it be equipped with -31's.
- e. That [] get together with [] and [] and work out engine and aircraft availability dates including assignment to Detachments A and B in order that we can more clearly see our aircraft/engine program.
- f. That if A and B cannot be equipped with -31's without cutting into the Air Force U-2 program or the KC-135 program, that we take appropriate action to gain the necessary priority over such Air Force programs to our benefit.

SIGNED

J. A. GIBBS
Deputy Project Director

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